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HEADSTART OPERATIONAL FIELD ANALYSIS. PROGRESS REPORT I.

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DURING THE SUMMER OF 1965, 5 AGENCIES SPONSORED A HEADSTART PROJECT FOR 4500 CHILDREN FROM THE GREATER CLEVELAND OHIO AREA. EFFORTS WERE CONCENTRATED ON ORGANIZING 5 ENDEAVORS. (1) THE DIRECTORS OF THE 5 AGENCIES WORKED TOGETHER TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION PROCEDURES. (2) FROM 8 CENTERS, 125 HEADSTART CHILDREN AND 125 NON-HEADSTART CHILDREN WERE CHOSEN AT RANDOM AS SAMPLES IN A PROGRAM TO DEVELOP CLASSROOM OBSERVATION METHODS. (3) THE SAME GROUPS OF CHILDREN WERE TESTED ON THE PRE-SCHOOL INVENTORY AND PEABODY PICTURE VOCABULARY TEST BY PARENTS AND PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS TO STUDY THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HEADSTART PARENTS AS ADMINISTRATORS OF PSYCHOLGICAL TESTS. (4) ALL 250 CHILDREN WERE TESTED DURING THE THIRD WEEK OF THE PROGRAM AND BEFORE THE END OF SCHOOL. DATA CONCERNING 50 SELECTED CHILDREN WERE GIVEN SPECIAL EXAMINATION AS A FOLLOWUP STUDY. (5) TWO SERVICE AND RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES DISCUSSED WERE A JOINT PROGRAM OF CLEVELAND AREA PEDIATRICIANS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS IN THE DETECTION AND SERVICING OF THE DEVIATING CHILD AND THE TRAINING OF PARENTS TO WORK WITH TEACHERS IN THE CLASSROOM. (CO)

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Headstart Operational Field Analysis*

Progress Report I

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This report will cover the following activities during the period from July 1, 1965 to October 1, 1965:

a) Coordination of the Greater Cleveland Area psychological assessment program for Operation Head Start, 1965.

b) Developing of methodology for classroom observation of a sample of Headstart (HS) Children and a comparison group--Non-Headstart Children (NHS).

c) Study of effectiveness of HS parents as administers of psychological tests.

d) Implementation of Follow-up study involving the HS children and their comparison group.

e) Other Developments.

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*This is the initial progress report related to Contract No. OEO-512; PR No. 353; Appropriation 1160500.

a) Coordination of the Greater Cleveland Area psychological assessment program for Operation Head Start, 1965.

There were five agencies participating in the Project Head Start during the summer of 1965, including:

Cleveland Public Schools (65HS 1915)
Cleveland Catholic Schools (65HS 1916)
Council of Churches (65HS 1917)
Community Action for Youth (65HS 5160)
Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Center (65HS 5144)

The total number of children enrolled approximated 4500, with Cleveland Public Schools servicing the giant's share, about 3500 in 60 child development centers.

Considerable effort was exerted to establish a relatively standard modus operandi amongst the agencies in applying any of the evaluative procedures. This was achieved through close collaboration with the directors of the five agencies and furthered by the very helpful liaison function of Mr. John Olsen, assistant to the director of Council for Economic Opportunity in Greater Cleveland.

Greater emphasis was placed on the assessment of the children, viz. Pre-school Inventory, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), Behavior Inventory, and Psychological Screening Device. To the end of more usable and valid results, and most important to get the job done, fifty (50) testers were located and trained in the administration of the Pre-school Inventory and the PPVT. The total number of pre-tests and post-tests administered: Pre-school Inventory--2574; PPVT--473. The Behavior Inventory and Psychological Screening Devices were completed by the teachers on all children. Group meetings and, when necessary, individual conferences were held with the teachers to discuss the procedures for which they had responsibility.

An unanticipated effort was required in the area of scanning test results and Record Book keeping. The nationally established plan of Records Clerks broke down, thus, initially, requiring the training and usage of time of the testing personnel to oversee and carry out these tasks. When the Records Clerks were employed (in late August), it was necessary to orient, train, and supervise their efforts in the scanning and record keeping since no trainer was supplied.

b) Developing of methodology for classroom observation of a sample of Headstart (HS) Children and a comparison group--Non-Headstart (NHS) Children.

The central theoretical interest of this follow-up study is the manner in which children demonstrate their attainment of concepts within the class-

room (a natural setting as contrasted with the testing situation). There was a search for the classroom activities which would most readily stimulate behavior relevant to target concept areas, viz., color, form, grouping, ordering, time sequence, and time duration. There was also the necessary review of the literature and pilot efforts to bring together the current knowledge about measuring such concepts relevant to observable behavior within the classroom.

Detailed recordings were made of a small sample of Headstart children with the following resultant information:

1) the necessary range of behavior can be achieved within the kindergarten-type classroom setting
2) the data can be acquired with satisfactory reliability
3) the best combination of classroom activity is free play and art sequence
4) there is a minimum of class disruption with the presence of an observer (However, it is recognized that the Headstart setting would permit more absorption of adults because of the different adult to child ratio)
5) teacher's observation may be used to augment the researcher's direct observations when the data was incomplete

The sampling procedure for the selection of both the experimental (HS) and the controls (NHS) was established. The HS group of 125 was selected from the eight Sample Centers through a system of random numbers. This was to assure an unbiased and representative group of the children from the Cleveland Area. The 125 NHS subjects would be randomly selected from the same kindergarten classes to which the HS group was assigned.

c) Study of effectiveness of HS parents as administers of psychological tests

The purpose of this project was to determine the plausability of utilizing parents of Head Start children as testers. It is a beginning of a broader effort to locate areas in professional functions which may be assumed by individuals indigenous to a particular setting, i.e., select individuals based on availability and familiarity with the setting instead of professional qualifications and then train them for a circumscribed service within their own community.

From 30 parent volunteers, a group of ten were selected for training in the administration of the Pre-school Inventory and Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. Three parents were unable to arrange to complete the training, and time did not permit replacements.

Each parent tested about nine Head Start Children. Using a counter-balanced order, the same children were tested within a maximum of 5 days by clinical psychology graduate students, generally experienced in testing

procedures and particularly sophisticated in the use of the Pre-school Inventory and PPVT.

Preliminary analysis shows an overall percentage of agreement between parents and graduate students of 76%[1] on the Pre-school Inventory. There was very high consistency amongst the parent testers (74% to 79% agreement), even though the range in school attainment was from 9th grade to 12th grade. The range of difference in test scores between the parent and graduate student tester on the PPVT was from 0 to 22. The average deviation was 5.51.

A detailed report of this pilot study will be completed by the next reporting and will be attached to Progress Report II.

d) Implementation of Follow-up study involving the HS children and their NHS comparison group

Staff:

At the time of this reporting the following full time and part time staff are employed: principle investigator, research assistant, secretary, seven observers, and three testers. The staff makeup will be maintained until June 1966 except for the limited use of the testers until October 1, 1965. The observers are involved in the last phase of orientation and training in the use of observational techniques and have become very conversant with the target concept areas.

Sampling:

The final samples have been established with the 250 children (125 HS; 125 NHS) distributed amongst 13 schools and 25 classes in the Cleveland Public Schools. The 50 children who will be intensively observed (an hour per week) are located in all of the schools and most of the classes. It should also be noted that there are some pure HS classes. Special examination will be given to the data of the children in these groups.

In addition to comparing the development of HS and NHS children, there will be a comparison of children in classes of Summer Head Start teachers (12) and Non-Head Start Teachers (13). This may give some indication of the impact of the Summer program on the practices of the teaching personnel. However, it is clearly established that this is not a study of teacher behavior or effectiveness.

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[1]It should also be noted that in 67% of the cases, when the child was more successful on the repeat test, the higher score occurred during the second administration. This strongly supports the anticipated--that the children learned to be more accurate through the test-retest procedure and, thus, suggests even more similarity in effectiveness between the parent and graduate student testers.

Baseline Testing:

The Pre-school Inventory and PPVT given to Headstart Children within the third week of the summer program will be utilized as a baseline measure of the child's functioning. To establish a comparable measure, the 125 NHS subjects are being given the same measures during their first three weeks of school. This testing will also yield information about the academic achievement comparability of the HS and NHS groups. All the subjects will have the same tests administered before the end of school in June, 1966.

e) Other developments

Observations and interactions during the summer project have resulted in considerable thinking about service and research possibilities. The following have left the "idea board" and in some way have been pursued.

1) Dr. Charles McClelland, medical director of the Council of Churches and Community Action for Youth, Headstart Programs, has indicated interest in establishing a joint program of Cleveland Area pediatricians and psychologists in the more effective detection and servicing of the deviating child of the inner city. Direct training of parents in reaching the child will be central in such a program. Further, there is interest in comparing inner city and suburban children, with similar ethnic backgrounds, on medical and psychological factors.

2) Efforts to implement institutional change have been given considerable thought. As suggested in another section of this report, parents in disadvantaged communities (as well as other areas) might be trained to work with teachers in the direct care of children in the classroom. Such a project would involve the selection, training and supervision of a group of such parents. Impact on the children within the classroom would be contrasted with classrooms in which such parents were not employed. Further, the impact of this experience of the parents on <u>their own</u> children would be measured. A method for defining the task so that the parent can successfully discharge it, is being developed.